

Police pursue photo suspect

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Duxbury police are trying to find the person who created a Dropbox page that contained nude or partially nude images of at least 50 Duxbury High School girls

Schools Superintendent Dr. Benedict Tantillo said that last Wednesday two female students went to one of Duxbury High School's assistant principals saying they had heard about a Dropbox file that allegedly contained compromising photographs of other female students and they were worried they were part of it.

According to the Duxbury police, the girls in the images were "in varying stages of undress." Dropbox is an on-line file sharing site.

The staff at the high school notified School Resource Officer Friend Weiler, Jr. who in turn contacted Duxbury Police Chief Matthew Clancy. Tantillo said the girls who alerted the school were not involved.

"We sent people over and we quickly determined we had

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a problem," said Clancy.

There are police on the Duxbury force trained in information technology and Clancy said they moved swiftly to get the Dropbox account frozen to preserve the evidence and then had that page shut down.

"First thing the next morning, we went to court and got a warrant that was served on Dropbox," Clancy said, adding that the site has been "cooperative" with the police investigation.

According to Tantillo, the site contains images of girls that were either taken by their boyfriends and posted to Dropbox, selfies taken and posted by the girls themselves or fake or altered pictures that were attached to names of Duxbury girls. Some photos show girls' faces; some do not. In some cases, there were no criminal violations in the photos at all, said Clancy referring to images in which the girls had clothes on. "Most appear to be selfies," he said, "but not all. Some girls names are attached to files but the pictures are not necessarily of them."

Tantillo said he was "pretty sure" that all were currently students at the high school.

Under Massachusetts law, any juvenile under 18 who takes a photo of themselves or others and distributes it in any way is breaking child pornography laws.



Duxbury Police Chief Matthew Clancy has gotten a warrant for the Dropbox file containing images of DHS girls.

"If a juvenile takes a picture and transmits that, then that act is a crime of distributing child pornography," said Clancy. "We have no intention of charging these girls with that crime. They have paid their price. We are certainly going after the person who created the file. It (the Dropbox file) has to come from one person, from one device. And if we are able to prove the charges, then we will file charges because there has to be a message here."

Clancy said it will take time to find who created the file. "It can be difficult to track them down and it's a bit of a process," he added.

Every girl involved was contacted by the school and was called in by police for an interview with their parents Wednesday and Thursday. The high school administrators called the parents of the students to let them know what they had heard and that the police would be calling them.

When asked where the questioning took place, Clancy said: "We did multiple interviews at multiple locations."

The Duxbury Police are investigating this issue and have been interviewing the students whose names appear on the list with their parents.

"There's a lot of work to be done," Clancy added. "We have to find out who are our victims and who are not."

"There are some young people here who are very embarrassed and very upset. They are victims," said Clancy. "They made a mistake and someone took advantage of that. Unfortunately, we are learning that many communities have been dealing with this very issue."

What bothers both Clancy and Tantillo is the fact that once images are posted to Internet sites they cannot be retrieved.

"When you put this stuff out there, you can't get it back," Clancy said. "Nobody can wipe it clean and you have no idea how far the images went. They could be downloaded to a computer. The kids need to know what they're getting into."



Superintendent Benedict Tantillo said the school will hold a forum on social media safety.

"Our main focus is to keep everyone safe because you never know when the pictures can come up," said Tantillo.

In an email to the school community, Tantillo asked parents to speak with their students about this issue. He wrote: "Just as I have mentioned parental influence on the issues of drugs and alcohol, the issue of the dangers of placing pictures with or without a person's approval on the Internet is another topic that needs to be discussed in the home."

The superintendent said the schools have addressed sexting and the perils of social media in the past and plan to have a forum for **School** students and parents in the future, but he doubts it will be before the **Dr.** end of school because he said it takes time to get a speaker.

"We are looking into several avenues to address girls and boys and social media," he said, adding that this topic will be part of the new wellness curriculum that will be rolled out in September for the next school year.